Australian Bureau of Statistics

6295.0 - Information Paper: Implementing the Redesigned Labour Force Survey Questionnaire, 2001

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ABS introduces improvements to Labour Force statistics

In April 2001 the ABS introduced a redesigned questionnaire for the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS) from which are derived Australia's official employment and unemployment estimates. The ABS announced details of the redesign early last year in **Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Questionnaire Redesign** (cat. no. 6294.0), released on 14 March 2000.

The redesigned questionnaire obtains new or extended information on job tenure, underemployment, hours worked, duration of unemployment, and marginal attachment to the labour force. The format of the questionnaire has been improved, and some question wording updated to improve the efficiency of the survey, enhance the quality of the data collected, and reflect current terminology and labour market conditions.

Some minor definitional changes have been introduced to bring ABS definitions into closer alignment with international standards for labour force statistics so as to improve international comparisons. One impact will be a small reduction in the unemployment rate.

The questionnaire changes are detailed in **Information Paper: Implementing the Redesigned Labour Force Survey Questionnaire** (cat. no. 6295.0), released today. The information paper also describes the impact of the changes on labour force statistics. The changes have been developed and tested over a number of years, and have involved wide consultation with users of labour force statistics.

To ensure continuity of time series, selected labour force series have been revised from April 1986 to March 2001 to reflect the impact of the more significant definitional changes. Details of these revisions are contained in the information paper.

The information paper includes all tables from the March 2001 **Labour Force Australia, Preliminary** (cat. no. 6202.0), released on 12 April, compiled on the revised basis. Table 24 from the March 2001 **Labour Force Australia** (cat. no. 6203.0), released on 27 April, has also been recompiled to show historical long-term unemployment data on the revised basis.

Original, seasonally adjusted and trend series, containing revised data between April 1986 and March 2001, are available electronically on AusStats from today. The revised historical series may also be obtained from the ABS on request.

The **Information Paper: Implementing the Redesigned Labour Force Survey Questionnaire** (cat. no. 6295.0) is available from ABS bookshops. The main features of the publication are available on this site. If you wish to purchase a copy of this publication, contact the ABS Bookshop in your capital city.

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